

Posted by u/cmdr\_shadowstalker 7 months ago   2  2

## Human Recreation

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### ::: Public Log: Xii Vadan Biological Observer GSD 2|25|2550:::

Most people don't visit IX. The Vul'cha glassed our homeworld four hundred years ago, and even now the biosphere is barely stable. Too high atmospheric nitrogen, too much carbon dioxide to be healthy for most galactic species, not to mention the fears of lingering radiation hotspots. Even members of my own species, the Ky'ril, hardly ever come home for more than Remembrance Day.

Since this is a public facing log, and the Ky'ril Vulcha conflict was ultimately a footnote in galactic history here are the highlights.

Four hundred years ago the Ky'ril and Vulchan Hegemony were at war, I don't actually remember why, maybe they didn't like Ky'ril having translucent wings?

A Ky'ril cruiser found its way into the terran home system after a blind FTL jump, no one was actually prepared for first contact, and then the Vul'cha followed them in.

The terrans didn't take too kindly to someone shooting at their guests, and returned fire, this diverted the Vul'cha war effort offering my people a chance to rebuild some.

The Vul'cha did not like this and sent a task fleet, and glassed three planets in the KY-Prime system, including the homeworld IX.

The terrans took exception to that and in the span of three months amassed more atomics than even the Garn confederacy has ever built and sued for peace with the Vul'cha.

The vul'cha believed it to be a bluff and the Terrans cracked three vul'cha military planetoids in their home system under sustained atomic bombardment.

The Vul'cha took the hint and capitulated when peace terms were offered a second time by the Terrans.

Why do I bring this up this close to Remembrance Day? Today I met a Terran for the first time. It was strange, while most members of the galactic community consider them to be a pest and overall rude; this one was not. Even among my people some might say they have a bit of a hero complex, this one didn't seem to. He called himself Strelok, though I believe that was an assumed identity as he paused a minute before speaking it. He wanted to know more about IX from a native stating that "there's only so much to be learned from a Gal-net travel advisory." Seeing as I am one of the few people planet-side actually monitoring the bio-diversity my name was recommended when he traveled through customs and asked for more relevant information about the planeside conditions.

I told him about most of the creatures outside the security cordon were wild and quite dangerous. He seemed... happy at this news? After a few more questions he asked me where to rent a speed and whether I knew of any good "camping" spots. It took some time for an explanation on that; apparently he's going to sleep outside the outpost in something called a tent... Is this something humans do for fun? I suggested he request a neutron stun rifle from perimeter security, he was after all going to be outside the outpost for an extended time and nightfall was too dangerous, even for a native to be outside.

He thanked me and said that a stun rifle would be "unfair" and as he put it, "If I get my head gnawed off it's my own damned fault".

I doubt he will make it through the night. Too many predators.

#### **::: Public Log: Xii Vadan Biological Observer GSD 2|27|2550:::**

This is probably going to be the most I've written in my personal log in years. At least in one entry.

Since my last entry I gleaned galnet for information about "camping" in terran culture. It is very similar to the old ways many species used to live prior to industrialization, and even prior to agrarian society. Most species don't partake in this ritual of sort and consider it barbaric and uncivilized. Humans however, camp as a way of "re-connecting with nature". Generally speaking camping by humans is done with an auto-shelter and few creature comforts making the accommodations "quaint" when compared to their homes... but I also stumbled on a few out of the way net forums dedicated to more "hardcore" camping where it seems not only humans, but others as well, take part in this sport. The equipment used for this is no more than a rough spun synthetic fabric shelter that has to be manually constructed, an insulation bag for sleeping and various simple cooking utensils, like stoves that use pressurized hydrocarbon fuels to generate heat.

Admittedly I kept going down this clickhole and found even other, more extreme forms of camping that use only a controlled fire for cooking, and even less equipment than that. Strelok falls into this latter category. I went out to try and make sure if he'd died his next of kin would be informed. When I found him, he was neither dead, nor using a tent for shelter. In fact it was an over-grown pre-war structure that had survived the war and subsequent four hundred years of plant growth. He had a small fire burning in some kind of old cabinet and was, as he put it, quite comfortable. I suspect, wherever this terran is from, his home may in fact be much like the woods outside the outpost.

I almost didn't recognize him. Gone was the plain gray flightsuit and instead he was clad in a mix of surplus equipment from many combat zones across the galaxy. Plain earthy green BDU's similar to those I'd seen in the museum that the terran troops used while aiding the Ky'ril against the Vul'cha. From the knee down he wore ceramic titanium armor that looked to be well worn and repurposed Legios blood guard gauntlets. The weapon he had with him looked positively ancient, steel and wood

construction, it uses individual cartridges with a chemical charge to propel solid metal at high speed. He claimed he had built it (out of a shovel no less?). But it looks so old and worn I suspect it's really an antique.

I asked how he managed to keep from being eaten, and he said that he "marked his territory". That... makes sense, even the apex predators of IX would shy away from unknown factors, much less an offworld omnivore...

I asked what he intends while here. His response was that he wants to explore and meet the local wildlife, and possibly practice his survival skills of trapping and hunting. I told him he's insane. I've studied the wildlife around this outpost for ten standard years. Another predator would certainly kill him if he tried to hunt in its territory.

He laughed. He actually laughed and asked if I've actually studied things up close rather than behind a drone controller. No. Why would I that's crazy, reckless and dangerous. Not since academy at least when I was tricked by one of my seniors to take a direct plant samples. No one's done that since before we'd mastered our planet's ecology and begun the march into space.

He laughed again and said I wouldn't understand why he was out there as I was... but if I wanted to he had a tale for me. And he spoke of a terran named Steve, not a story... a legend. According to Strelok, Steve was a terran that lived during the late 20th century and had an absolute indomitable passion for understanding and quantifying life and protecting it. He would wrestle with creatures called alligators, and play with reptiles like snakes, all while helping capture and relocate animals to protect them from other terrans that wanted to kill them for various reasons. Some wanted the meat, others the skin, still even others just for the sport or because it was a "nuisance." It didn't matter where on the terran home world these creatures resided, he would actively seek them out, and try to understand what "made them tick", and he primarily resided on one of the most dangerous continents on the planet. Not because of war or strife, but merely the animals that lived there were so dangerous and so extreme that even some biologists still have trouble making sense of their evolutionary paths to this day.

I thanked him for the tale and declined the offer to stay before returning to my speeder. It's not safe out there. He asked me to bring a bottle of alcohol to share for another story if I wanted it. I didn't follow the logic then... and even though I'm watching documentaries about Steve and made by him... it still doesn't make sense.

#### **::: Public Log: Xii Vadan Biological Observer GSD 3|01| 2550:::**

I have spent the last four solar days viewing Terran records of "Steve Irwin"... I cannot be certain if these actually happened or if they are a dramatization. A peachy skin toned terran male in tan shorts and a shirt with a stick in one hand and an accent that takes the terran words "good day mate" and turns it into "G'dey mate".... And he just picks up creature with the stick nonchalantly and says "This is the most dangerous critta on this continent, its venom can stop yer' heart in a matter of seconds".... Then just plays with it before letting it loose to go wrestle a creature that looks like a garn that was flattened by a ship, only to tape it's jaws shut in order to safely remove it from a terran village where it had begun to eat small avian creatures....

That...is what Steve did....

I am terrified and in some small way... inspired.... This might be the lack of sleep... or perhaps the centauri gin I tried to calm my nerves after seeing the... well horrifying level of violence that a hippo can muster... but I may take Strelok up on his offer of camping before he leaves. I'm.... well giddy, as though I was back at academy... I haven't been this interested in something since I was a young girl getting to see the homeworld for the first time ever.

This may be my last log..

**::: Public Log: Xii Vadan Biological Observer GSD 3|7|2550:::**

Camping is fun... and it is strangely relaxing. Despite running away from predatory creatures and sitting around a fire, playing cards and guitar, well... learning to play in my case. I've never actually seen my homeworld up close like this. Over the last six days I've been bit by bugs, chased by wargs (dire wolves as strelok calls them) stalked the O'lan, which Strelok insists has to be a cousin of the terran deer... somehow, and delved into ancient ruins to look for lost documents and artifacts. I still don't know if this is what camping is about but I do.... I feel like I've connected to a bit of myself that I've forgotten about. I know my collgues would find this unorthodox, or even a little heretical, but I feel we've been a bit too clinical with our studies, that not physically going out into the field and leaving everything to drones and probes is... wrong for lack of a better word.

Strelok and I swapped stories long into the night, mine were... far less interesting but he listened closely, and well... some of his stories... these things called wendigos, even if there's no proof they ever existed, the mere concept is unnerving.

**::: Public Log: Xii Vadan Biological Observer GSD 3|9|2550:::**

Yesterday tragedy struck, not for myself or Strelok, though he seems to be taking it far heavier than I am. When we were hiking through a set of unmapped ruins after collecting a small treasure trove of ancient data-shards we came upon the site of a fight between a warg and a male o'lan. The o'lan was possibly the largest I'd ever seen, but it was dead and the warg itself had taken a severe beating. Strelok drew his rifle as a precaution but the warg just let out a whining growl and started limping away. While he stood guard in case it was an ambush I surveyed the scene and recorded what had transpired. Up until now there's been no record of an o'lan actually fighting against a warg, at least not in and Department of Ixian Biological Survey records. From Strelok's perch in a tree he called for my attention before shimmying down and mentioning there was something I should see.

A short hike through the field of ruins later and we found the warg, it turned out to be a female and we watched her breath her last as it laid there desperately trying to crawl into a half excavated building. Inside we could hear the whining of young warglings. I didn't understand what Strelok said, it was in a terran dialect... but it sounded sorrowful or like an apology. We've established a camp in some trees to several kilometers from the den and have a stealth drone camouflaged closer to the den site to observe. Hopefully the mother warg's pack mates will take in the pups.

**::: Public Log: Xii Vadan Biological Observer GSD 3|10|2550:::**

He spent the entire day watching the biomonitor. The warg pups are starting to starve, and we haven't seen any indication there's any other pack members to adopt the wargs... Truthfully, DIBS doesn't have a lot of data on the behavior of wargs during their denning cycles... this could be normal.

**::: Public Log: Xii Vadan Biological Observer GSD 3|11|2550:::**

Strelok went and collected the pups from the den... this goes against every code and regulation I know of for biological studies... Officially I have to admonish him... but, it feels like the right thing to do. They haven't even opened their eyes, they're so young and small (and floofy as Strelok explained). He's said he works with a foundation on his homeworld that works with creatures similar to wargs, and after a quick genetic analysis was able to determine what kind of nutrients would work for them. It's going to take no small amount of paperwork to clear them for offworld travel. I can tell he is excited though, he has a gleam in his eye when he talks about cross fostering and how the genetics seem to match up enough based off his scan that they may be able to hybridize with terran wolves... and after the excitement of the last week or so... I am interested in seeing the results of this project.

**::: Public Log: Xii Vadan, Biological Sciences Oversee "Ixian Unorthodox Methodology Unit" GSD 10|9|2563:::**

It's been close to a year since I last heard directly from Strelok, according to a technician at the "Wolf Cage", the wolf breeding and pack introduction foundation he's involved with, he's been long term on a project near the Terminus systems in an attempt to preserve some of the biological diversity before the growing war there engulfs all the habitable planets. I can't say I'm surprised. In the last thirteen years I've known him he's dropped off the grid, as humans would say, at the drop of a hat, no less than seven times, each time returning just as suddenly to regale me with tales of ice wyrms and crystalline spiders that shimmer under the light of UV stars (that how I found out he can see slightly into the UV spectrum and see my wings... which explains the garking when we first met.) Honestly... I've actually been rather busy myself since my promotion. The leadership of the department finally relented and gave me funding and a sub department to actually directly study the flora and fauna of our world, hence my new title.

I think the drone's eye view of me wrestling a warg that had woken up from a stunner blast while I was securing a tracking collar "helped" my case? I heard it went viral on the g-net.... I don't know, I think the department heads were just terrified I might lead a pack of them directly into their offices. Regardless, lots of paperwork and undergrads to pick through for field teams. There's a pile of "undesirables" from the galactic academy that I've already earmarked for interviews. Humans mostly, but a couple of Ky'ril that seem a bit more hands-on for their studies than most academics seem to like.

Additionally I received a crate today. The courier that delivered it had the thickest terran accent I've ever heard, and reeked of engine degreaser, at least that's what I think it was. Honestly I've never heard of the company before "Ivanov's Galactic Express, the uniform was olive drab with a floppy fuzzy looking hat with flaps down over his ears. "You are the Zee Vadmn... Da?" He had to repeat it several times before I could understand he was speaking galactic common. I affirmed and he handed me a datapad before bringing in a large wooden crate with air holes in the sides, I wasn't expecting a delivery, and the shipping information didn't indicate where in the galaxy it had come from. "Delivery from one: Strelakov to Biological Observer Zee Vadmn. Cube bless your day." He explained before leaving after I handed the datapad back.

Taped to the crate was a bundle of paper. Yes, taped paper. Archaic, but I'm used to it... and it actually works really well in the field.

*The text reads as follows, "Heard you might be receiving a promotion and have a field operation going soon, so I figured you might want someone to protect you since you'll probably be fieldgoing more than before (I hope, don't let them tie you down and make you drive a desk!). One of the litters had a runt and he might be a little easier to handle than one of the larger hybrids. Don't worry, he's from a line that's bred for rich yuppies that want a trainable direwolf as a pet or guard dog. They're fiercely loyal to whoever they pack bond to, just remember what I taught you about training dogs and you'll be fine. Treat him well.*

\*Godspeed, \*

-Strelakov

*Ps: I think I'll be free before new years, let's catch up and see a holo or something"*

There was... more to the letter but that was more of a private nature. Regardless, the crate was simple enough to open, and I soon found myself staring face to face with a sleeping and very young warg/wolf hybrid with black and silver fur. Barely old enough to be weaned much less trained, as well as a reference guide for dog training, just in case I had forgot.

/log